# Will Ma

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### Employment

#### Columbia University, New York, NY

- 2024 Roderick H. Cushman Associate Professor of Business 2023 – 2024 Associate Professor of Business
- $2019-2023 \quad Assistant \ Professor \ of \ Business$
- 2018 2019 Google Research, Cambridge, MA Postdoctoral Researcher, Operations Research Team
- 2015 Jane Street Capital, New York, NY Trader Intern
- 2013 2015 **Lunarch Studios Inc.**, Waterloo, ON Canada *Co-founder* I took leave from MIT in 2013 to form the start-up Lunarch Studios, which launched the strategy game *Prismata* on the *Steam* platform.

### Education

- 2015 2018 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
   2010 2012 Ph.D. in Operations Research Advisor: David Simchi-Levi
- 2006 2010 University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON Canada B.Math with honors in Pure Mathematics and Combinatorics/Optimization

## **Journal Papers**

1. Degeneracy is OK: Logarithmic Regret for Network Revenue Management with Indiscrete Distributions with Jiashuo Jiang, Jiawei Zhang

Operations Research, forthcoming

- 2. The Benefits of Delay to Online Decision-Making with Yaqi Xie, Linwei Xin Management Science, forthcoming
  - \*<br/>covered in Chicago Booth Review, 2023
  - \*selected for presentation in the MSOM Supply Chain Management SIG, 2023

3. Tightness without Counterexamples: A New Approach and New Results for Prophet Inequalities with Jiashuo Jiang, Jiawei Zhang

Mathematics of Operations Research, forthcoming

- Improved Guarantees for Offline Stochastic Matching via new Ordered Contention Resolution Schemes with Brian Brubach, Nathaniel Grammel, Aravind Srinivasan Mathematics of Operations Research, articles in advance
- Leveraging the degree of Dynamic Substitution in Assortment and Inventory Planning with Jingwei Zhang, Huseyin Topaloglu Operations Research (Technical Note), articles in advance
- 6. On (Random-order) Online Contention Resolution Schemes for the Matching Polytope of (Bipartite) Graphs with Calum MacRury, Nathaniel Grammel

Operations Research, articles in advance

7. Tight Guarantees for Multi-unit Prophet Inequalities and Online Stochastic Knapsack with Jiashuo Jiang, Jiawei Zhang

Operations Research, articles in advance

\*Jiashuo Jiang was a Finalist in the George E. Nicholson Student Paper Competition, 2022

\*Jiashuo Jiang was a Finalist for the Jeff McGill Student Paper Award for Revenue Management and Pricing, 2021

8. Online Matching Frameworks under Stochastic Rewards, Product Ranking, and Unknown Patience with Brian Brubach, Nathaniel Grammel, Aravind Srinivasan

Operations Research, articles in advance

- 9. Order Selection Problems in Hiring Pipelines with Boris Epstein Operations Research, 2024
- Optimizing for Strategy Diversity in the Design of Video Games with Oussama Hanguir, Jiangze Han, Christopher Thomas Ryan Mathematical Programming, 2024
- 11. Assortment Planning for Recommendations at Checkout under Inventory Constraints with Xi Chen, David Simchi-Levi, Linwei Xin

Mathematics of Operations Research, 2024

\*1st Place, Chinese Scholars Association for Management Science and Engineering (CSAMSE) Best Paper Award sponsored by Columbia Business School, 2017

\*covered in Chicago Booth Review, 2018

12. Tight Guarantees for Static Threshold Policies in the Prophet Secretary Problem with Nick Arnosti

Operations Research, 2023

13. Order-optimal Correlated Rounding for Fulfilling Multi-item E-commerce Orders Manufacturing & Service Operations Management, 2023

\*accepted for presentation at Applied and Computational Discrete Algorithms (ACDA), 2023

\*invited for presentation in Online Algorithms & Online Rounding workshop at FOCS 2023

\*selected for presentation in the MSOM Supply Chain Management SIG, 2022

14. When is Assortment Optimization Optimal?

Management Science, 2023

\*2nd Place, Rothkopf Junior Researcher Paper Prize for Auctions and Market Design, 2021

 $^{*}\mathrm{selected}$  for spotlight presentation in the INFORMS Revenue Management and Pricing Conference, 2022

\*selected for presentation in the MSOM Service SIG, 2021

15. Fairness Maximization among Offline Agents in Online-Matching Markets with Pan Xu, Yifan Xu

ACM Transactions on Economics and Computation (TEAC), 2023

16. Revenue-Optimal Deterministic Auctions for Multiple Buyers with Ordinal Preferences over Fixed-Price Items

ACM Transactions on Economics and Computation (TEAC) (invited submission), 2022

17. Bifurcating Constraints to Improve Approximation Ratios for Network Revenue Management with Reusable Resources with Jackie Baek

Operations Research (Technical Note), 2022

18. Distributionally Robust Linear and Discrete Optimization with Marginals with Louis Chen, Karthik Natarajan, David Simchi-Levi, Zhenzhen Yan

Operations Research, 2022

19. Inventory Balancing with Online Learning with Wang Chi Cheung, David Simchi-Levi, Xinshang Wang

Management Science, 2022

20. Dynamic Pricing (and Assortment) under a Static Calendar with David Simchi-Levi, Jinglong Zhao

Management Science, 2021

21. On Policies for Single-leg Revenue Management with Limited Demand Information with David Simchi-Levi, Chung-Piaw Teo

Operations Research, 2021

22. Algorithms for Online Matching, Assortment, and Pricing with Tight Weight-dependent Competitive Ratios with David Simchi-Levi

Operations Research, 2020

\*Finalist, George E. Nicholson Student Paper Competition, 2017

23. Separation between Second Price Auctions with Personalized Reserves and the Revenue Optimal Auction with Balasubramanian Sivan

**Operations Research Letters**, 2020

24. Strong Mixed-Integer Programming Formulations for Trained Neural Networks with Ross Anderson, Joey Huchette, Christian Tjandraatmadja, Juan Pablo Vielma

Mathematical Programming, 2020

25. Improvements and Generalizations of Stochastic Knapsack and Markovian Bandits Approximation Algorithms

Mathematics of Operations Research, 2018 \*2nd place, INFORMS Optimization Society Student Paper Competition, 2017

26. Packing and Covering Triangles in Planar Graphs with Qing Cui, Penny Haxell Graphs and Combinatorics, 2009

### Working Papers

1. Beyond IID: Data-Driven Decision-Making in Heterogeneous Environments with Omar Besbes, Omar Mouchtaki

Minor Revision in Management Science

2. From Contextual Data to Newsvendor Decisions: On the Actual Performance of Data-Driven Algorithms with Omar Besbes, Omar Mouchtaki

Major Revision in Management Science

- 3. Real-Time Personalized Order Holding with Mohammad Reza Aminian, Linwei Xin R & R in Management Science \*covered in Chicago Booth Review, 2024
- 4. Online Contention Resolution Schemes for Network Revenue Management and Combinatorial Auctions with Calum MacRury, Jingwei Zhang
- 5. Dynamic Pricing for Reusable Resources: The Power of Two Prices with Santiago Balseiro, Wenxin Zhang

Major Revision in Operations Research

6. Online Bipartite Matching with Advice: Tight Robustness-Consistency Tradeoffs for the Two-Stage Model with Billy Jin

R & R in Management Science

\*Billy Jin was Winner of Student Paper Prize of INFORMS Decision Analysis Society, 2023

- 7. Survey of Data-driven Newsvendor: Unified Analysis and Spectrum of Achievable Regrets with Zhuoxin Chen
- 8. VC Theory for Inventory Policies with Yaqi Xie, Linwei Xin \*selected for presentation in the MSOM Supply Chain Management SIG, 2024
- 9. Online Matching and Contention Resolution for Edge Arrivals with Vanishing Probabilities with Calum MacRury, Pranav Nuti
- 10. A Nonparametric Framework for Online Stochastic Matching with Correlated Arrivals with Ali Aouad

Major Revision in Management Science

11. Optimizing Inventory Placement for a Downstream Online Matching Problem with Boris Epstein

Major Revision in Manufacturing & Service Operations Management

\*Boris Epstein was a Finalist in the George E. Nicholson Student Paper Competition, 2024

- 12. Random-order Contention Resolution via Continuous Induction: Tightness for Bipartite Matching under Vertex Arrivals with Calum MacRury
- 13. The Competitive Ratio of Threshold Policies for Online Unit-density Knapsack Problems with David Simchi-Levi, Jinglong Zhao

Minor Revision in Management Science

\*Jinglong Zhao earned an Honorable Mention in the POMS-HK Student Paper Competition, 2020

14. Multi-Stage and Multi-Customer Assortment Optimization With Inventory Constraints with Elaheh Fata, David Simchi-Levi

#### **Conference** Papers

1. Sample Complexity of Posted Pricing for a Single Item with Billy Jin, Thomas Kesselheim, Sahil Singla

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2024 (Spotlight)

- 2. Fair Secretaries with Unfair Predictions with Eric Balkanski, Andreas Maggiori Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2024
- 3. Promoting Fairness Among Dynamic Agents in Online-Matching Markets under Known Stationary Arrival Distributions with Pan Xu

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2024

- Online Matching and Contention Resolution for Edge Arrivals with Vanishing Probabilities with Calum MacRury, Pranav Nuti Economics and Computation (EC), 2024
- 5. Random-order Contention Resolution via Continuous Induction: Tightness for Bipartite Matching under Vertex Arrivals with Calum MacRury

Symposium on Theory of Computing (STOC), 2024

- Tightness without Counterexamples: A New Approach and New Results for Prophet Inequalities with Jiashuo Jiang, Jiawei Zhang Economics and Computation (EC), 2023
- 7. A Nonparametric Framework for Online Stochastic Matching with Correlated Arrivals with Ali Aouad

Economics and Computation (EC), 2023

- 8. Order-optimal Correlated Rounding for Fulfilling Multi-item E-commerce Orders Economics and Computation (EC), 2023
- Optimizing for Strategy Diversity in the Design of Video Games with Oussama Hanguir, Christopher Thomas Ryan Integer Programming and Combinatorial Optimization (IPCO), 2023

10. On (Random-order) Online Contention Resolution Schemes for the Matching Polytope of (Bipartite) Graphs with Calum MacRury, Nathaniel Grammel

Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA), 2023

- 11. Order Selection Problems in Hiring Pipelines with Boris Epstein Web and Internet Economics (WINE), 2022
- 12. Constructing Demand Curves from a Single Observation of Bundle Sales with David Simchi-Levi

Web and Internet Economics (WINE), 2022

13. Beyond IID: Data-Driven Decision-Making in Heterogeneous Environments with Omar Besbes, Omar Mouchtaki

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2022

14. Online Bipartite Matching with Advice: Tight Robustness-Consistency Tradeoffs for the Two-Stage Model with Billy Jin

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2022

15. Tight Guarantees for Static Threshold Policies in the Prophet Secretary Problem with Nick Arnosti

Economics and Computation (EC), 2022

- 16. When is Assortment Optimization Optimal? Economics and Computation (EC), 2022
- 17. Group-level Fairness Maximization in Online Bipartite Matching with Pan Xu, Yifan Xu Autonomous Agents and Multi-Agent Systems (AAMAS), 2022
- Tight Guarantees for Multi-unit Prophet Inequalities and Online Stochastic Knapsack with Jiashuo Jiang, Jiawei Zhang Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA), 2022
- 19. Fairness Maximization among Offline Agents in Online-Matching Markets with Pan Xu, Yifan Xu

Web and Internet Economics (WINE), 2021

- 20. Improved Guarantees for Offline Stochastic Matching via new Ordered Contention Resolution Schemes with Brian Brubach, Nathaniel Grammel, Aravind Srinivasan Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2021
- Follow Your Star: New Frameworks for Online Stochastic Matching with Known and Unknown Patience with Brian Brubach, Nathaniel Grammel, Aravind Srinivasan Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS), 2021
- 22. Reaping the Benefits of Bundling under High Production Costs with David Simchi-Levi Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS), 2021
- Revenue-Optimal Deterministic Auctions for Multiple Buyers with Ordinal Preferences over Fixed-Price Items Web and Internet Economics (WINE), 2020
- 24. The Convex Relaxation Barrier, Revisited: Tightened Single-Neuron Relaxations for Neural Network Verification with Christian Tjandraatmadja, Ross Anderson, Joey Huchette, Krunal Patel, Juan Pablo Vielma

Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), 2020

- 25. Distributionally Robust Max Flows with Louis Chen, Jim Orlin, David Simchi-Levi Symposium on Simplicity in Algorithms (SOSA), 2020
- Tight Weight-dependent Competitive Ratios for Online Edge-weighted Bipartite Matching and Beyond with David Simchi-Levi Economics and Computation (EC), 2019
- 27. Improvements and Generalizations of Stochastic Knapsack and Markovian Bandits Approximation Algorithms Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA), 2014
- 28. A Geometric Approach to Combinatorial Fixed-point Theorems with Elyot Grant European Conference on Combinatorics, Graph Theory and Applications (EUROCOMB), 2013
- The Approximability and Integrality Gap of Interval Stabbing and Independence Problems with Shalev Ben-David, Elyot Grant, Malcolm Sharpe Canadian Conference on Computational Geometry (CCCG), 2012

### **Book Chapters**

1. Randomized Rounding Approaches to Online Allocation, Sequencing, and Matching *INFORMS Tutorials*, 2024

#### Cases

- 1. Temu: Slow and Cheap Wins the Race Columbia CaseWorks, forthcoming
- Ventilator Rationing during the Covid-19 Pandemic Columbia Case Works, 2020
   \*Finalist, Informs Case Competition, 2020

### Grants

Columbia-Dream Sports AI Innovation Center, "Dynamic State Dependent Catalog Optimization Approach for Contest Generation", joint with Vineet Goyal Amount: \$122,502

Columbia Center of AI Technology (CAIT) in collaboration with Amazon, "Joint Selection and Inventory Optimization under Limited Capacity", joint with Huseyin Topaloglu Amount: \$150,000; Duration: January 2022–June 2023

#### Will Ma

### Teaching

Columbia:	
2025 Spring	B9136 Analysis of Algorithms in Operations Research (PhD)
2024 Fall-A	B8109 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2024 Summer-block	B8109 Revenue and Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2024 Spring	B8109 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2023 Spring	B9136 Topics in Revenue and Supply Chain Management (PhD)
2023 Spring	B8109 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2022 Spring	B8108 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2021 Spring	B9136 Topics in Revenue and Supply Chain Management (PhD)
2021 Spring	B8108 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
2020 Spring	B8108 Supply Chain Management (MBA)
MIT:	
2017 Spring	15.762/15.763 Supply Chain Management, co-instructor
2016 Winter	15.S50 Special Seminar in Management
2013 Winter	15.S50 Special Seminar in Management
2012 Winter	15.S50 Special Seminar in Management

Special Seminar in Management: This is a course I designed based on my experience as a former professional poker player. It consists of eight 90-minute lectures and two problem sets, which grant a 1/4-credit at MIT. I use the game of poker to illustrate concepts in probability and statistics, and more generally, as a framework within which to think about difficult decisions, uncertainty, risk, and a good outcome vs. a good decision. This has now become a yearly course at MIT, and has been placed onto MIT OpenCourseWare. Furthermore, I have been invited to give the introductory lecture from this course, "The Joy of Making Good Decisions", at various venues, including *Google New York, Riot Games*, the *MIT Entrepreneurship Center*, and the *MIT Master of Finance* program.

### Academic Mentorship

**Current students**: Boris Epstein (Columbia DRO Ph.D. expected 2025), Wenxin Zhang (Columbia DRO Ph.D. expected 2026; co-advised with Santiago Balseiro), Yaqi Xie (Chicago Booth Ph.D. expected 2027; co-advised with Linwei Xin), Matias Romero (Columbia DRO Ph.D. expected 2027; co-advised with Hongyao Ma)

Former students: Omar Mouchtaki (Columbia DRO Ph.D. 2024; co-advised with Omar Besbes), Jiashuo Jiang (NYU Stern Ph.D. 2022; co-advised with Jiawei Zhang)

**Other student collaborators**: Billy Jin (Cornell ORIE), Nathaniel Grammel (Maryland CS), Mohammad Aminian (Chicago Booth), Pranav Nuti (Stanford Math)

Current postdocs: Calum MacRury, Andreas Maggiori (co-mentored with Eric Balkanski)

Former postdocs: Jingwei Zhang (co-mentored with Huseyin Topaloglu)

Thesis committee member: Hao-Ting Wei (Columbia IEOR Ph.D. 2024), Shawn Xia (Columbia DRO Ph.D. 2024), Harsh Sheth (Columbia IEOR Ph.D. 2023), Noemie Perivier (Columbia IEOR Ph.D. 2023), Judy Gan (Columbia DRO Ph.D. 2023), Oussama Hanguir (Columbia IEOR Ph.D. 2022), Xingyu Zhang (Columbia IEOR Ph.D. 2021)

### **Other Professional Activities**

Associate Editor for journals: Operations Research, Management Science

Reviewer for journals: Operations Research, Management Science, Mathematics of Operations Research, Manufacturing & Service Operations Management, Mathematical Programming, Transportation Science, IN-FORMS Journal on Computing, Production and Operations Management, Naval Research Logistics, Journal of the Operational Research Society, SIAM Journal on Computing, SIAM Journal on Discrete Mathematics, Algorithmica, ACM Transactions on Economics and Computation

Program Committee for conferences: EC 2025 (senior), EC 2024 (senior), WINE 2023 (senior), EC 2023, WINE 2022, EC 2022, WINE 2021, EC 2021

Reviewer for conferences: ICALP 2024, STOC 2024, SODA 2024, NeurIPS 2023, ESA 2023, STOC 2023, IPCO 2023, ITCS 2022, NeurIPS 2022, ESA 2022, SODA 2021, SODA 2020, SODA 2018

Co-organizer of conferences: Revenue Management & Pricing (RMP) 2025, NYC Ops Day 2024, NYC Ops Day 2023, RMP cluster at INFORMS 2022

Co-organizer of IEOR-DRO seminar series at Columbia, 2021 -

Organizer of DSL seminar series at MIT, 2016 – 2018

Visiting Scholar, hosted by Prof. Chung-Piaw Teo of the Department of Analytics & Operations in NUS Business School, January 2017

Co-supervisor (with David Simchi-Levi) of Arjun Khandelwal through the MIT Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), working on "Predicting User Choice in Video Games"

### Invited Talks

2024 Rice Business School, Operations Management seminar Duke Fuqua, Decision Sciences seminar CMU Tepper, Operations Research seminar Baruch, Operations Management seminar University of Science and Technology of China, Digital Intelligence Supply Chain seminar Rutgers CS Theory lunch **INFORMS** tutorial on Randomized Rounding Banff workshop on New Directions in Machine Learning Theory TTIC workshop on Data-Driven Decision Processes: From Theory to Practice Tsinghua SEM, Management Science and Engineering seminar CUHK, DOT-SEEM seminar HKUST, joint IE/OM seminar HKU, seminar jointly hosted by Business School's IIM and Department of Computer Science Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, ITCS seminar CUHK-Shenzhen, School of Data Science colloquium series University of Tokyo, seminar for research group of Yasushi Kawase Stanford University, RAIN (Research on Algorithms and Incentives in Networks) seminar Banff workshop on Combinatorial Optimization for Online Platforms Simons Institute reunion workshop for Data-driven Decision Processes program

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- 2023 Online Algorithms & Online Rounding workshop at FOCS Cornell ORIE seminar series Cornell Johnson, OTIM seminar
- 2022 Columbia DRO Brown Bag seminar
  Tiger Analytics academic seminar
  Simons Institute weekly seminar for Data-driven Decision Processes program
  Berkeley IEOR weekly seminar
  3rd Workshop on Information and Learning, IESE Barcelona
  MIT Operations Research seminar series
  UIUC ISE weekly seminar
- 2021 University of Maryland, Theory CS group CATS seminar HKUST Business School, ISOM seminar
   2nd Workshop on Information and Learning, virtual NYU Stern, Operations Management seminar
   Stanford Business School, OIT seminar
- 2020 CBS PFS No Free Lunch seminar UMD Smith USC Marshall
- 2019 NJIT Tuchman
  Cornell Tech
  DSL seminar, MIT
  1st Workshop on Information and Learning, IESE Barcelona
  Core Data Science, Facebook Research
  Algorithms Seminar, Google Research NYC
- 2018 Duke Fuqua, Operations Management Columbia IEOR-DRO seminar Harvard Kennedy School, Quantitative Analysis WUSTL Olin, Operations and Manufacturing Management Georgia Tech ISyE CMU Tepper, Operations Research UW Foster, Operations Management UCLA Anderson, Decisions, Operations, and Technology Management Chicago Booth, Operations Management
- 2017 UVA Darden, Quantitative Analysis
  INSEAD, Technology and Operations Management
  Northwestern Kellogg, Operations Management
  Dartmouth Tuck, Operations and Management Science
  MIT Sloan, Operations Management seminar
  Stanford Market Innovation Workshop
  Princeton ORFE
  NYU Stern, Operations Management seminar
  NUS Business School, Analytics & Operations seminar
  SUTD Engineering Systems and Design seminar
- 2016 Cornell ORIE Ph.D. Student Workshop

# **Outside Activities**

Columbia Business School requires faculty members to disclose any activities that might present a real or apparent conflict of interest. I currently have no outside activities fitting this description.